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TOP DESTINATIONS FOR MARCH MAY SURPRISE YOU. PAGE 20

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Our SXSW coverage is a little 'Premature'

PAGE 15

Actress Eva Green expands her 'Empire'

PAGE 16

How 'Marry Smart' stirs up controversy

PAGE 18

LOSING ITS VALUE

PAGE 02

Deteriorating artwork in Thomas Paine Plaza has peeling paint, rust and is covered in graffiti and stickers. City Controller Alan Butkovitz said the city isn't taking good care of its artwork. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Autopsy of autistic woman inconclusive

No answers. A medical examiner spokesman said lab tests may not show a cause of death for more than two months.
Investigation. Two city detective offices are trying to find how Christina Sankey got to West Philadelphia from Center City. PAGE 04

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NEWS

Top 3

What's trending at Metro.us

1 'VIDEO: Pug picks fight with police dog, officers'

2 'DIARY: Metro's Ned Ehrbar is let loose in Austin for the interactive and film portion of SXSW'

3 'Minnesota Rep. Pat Garofalo tweets racist comment about NBA'

Quoted

"But why did justin bieber act like lil wayne in his deposition? All that kid does is pose"

Pose or no, @White_Mike93, he kept his trap shut.

The importance of art in the heart of the city

Checking in. The city controller's art audit yielded concerning results.

Once again, it comes back to the schools.

The motivation to inspect the city's art collection stemmed from the school district's attempt to sell its own art last year.

City Controller Alan Butkovitz said the school district thought its more than 1,000-piece collection was worth at least $30 million in the early 2000s, but then saw the value plummet in the post-recession era. Latest estimates put the collection's worth around $1 million. "We were very concerned."

The conversation moved from fear for the security over those pieces "into a generalized concern about how the city is maintaining the art IT owns," Butkovitz said.

His office released a performance audit recently of the Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy, which oversees the city's robust 1,000-piece collection, which includes sculptures, reliefs, mosaics, stained glass kinetic works, architectural adornments, paintings and murals.

Butkovitz claimed to find damaged, vandalized, uncategorized and missing pieces. The report also blasted the department for its lack of procedures for loaning, relocating, valuing and cataloging individual art pieces.

Margot Berg, public art director for the OACCE, said part of the report was inaccurate.

"We have a detailed inventory of all the works in the collection," she said. "And we've undertaken the majority of the city's most treasured artworks — some going back to the 1800s."

She conceded the office is adopting the suggestions to create a manual of its processes. But she said it's hard to get to it all. At the school district, the art was to provide "a sense of aesthetics, a civilized tone to the building," Butkovitz said. But with the city's art, it's all over the place.

"They're in places like recreation centers, they're murals on walls, they're hanging from the ceilings of recreation centers, and no special precautions are made to recognize that this is art and that it may have value and it needs to be protected in some way."

School district officials were not immediately available for comment.

Among the criticized

- The pictures at Seventh Street and Snyder Avenue at the Whitman Branch Library at 22nd and Snyder Avenue have holes punched in each corner.
- Vandalism can be seen on the War Memorial in Harrowgate Park.
- Your move, the artifacts outside the Municipal Services Building Plaza, are weather-worn, graffitied and covered with stickers.

Buying and selling

1 percent set for art's sake

First established in 1959, the city's Percent-for-Art Program requires 1 percent of all capital projects be spent on public art.

The plan was to enhance the city structure. The art is not required to be reported in the city's financial statements.

And if any pieces of the artwork are sold, the proceeds can only be used to acquire other pieces of art for the collections.

TOMMY ROWAN
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Activists arrested in Keystone protest

Police scuffle with protesters blocking a door at a rally against the Keystone XL oil pipeline in front of the Federal Building in Old City on Monday, where approximately half a dozen activists were arrested. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Pass. Leaders agree on pot arrest cutdown

The cops and politicians are on the same page: arrests for possession of small amounts of marijuana could be useless.

Councilman Jim Kenney, who proposed a bill in January that would end the requirement to arrest offenders in possession of under an ounce, headed the committee meeting in council chambers.

Francis Healy, representing Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey, said the commissioner is open to the change and said it is a good idea for all parties involved to sit down and the discuss the proposal.

Under Kenney's legislation, the offender would still be sent to the district attorney's "Small Amount of Marijuana" program, which includes a three-hour drug abuse class and a $300 fine.

TOMMY ROWAN

Quoted

"Custodial arrests should not be required in the typical case of possession of a small amount of marijuana."

Healy

SPCA

Taxidermist says he skinned feline

The Pa. SPCA said a taxidermist admitted to skinning a large feline and leaving it in a North Philadelphia parking lot on Sunday.

Spokeswoman Sarah Eremus said the man claimed he was a licensed hunter. Officials found the large feline, whose paws and ears were severed, discarded in a lot at 31st and Jefferson streets. METRO

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How can anyone think pugs are ugly?

Sarah Magness, left, holds Molly Moodles (a pug famous on Instagram), and Jennifer Prince holds Sarah Jane, in baby carriers as they toured the city on Monday. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Cause of death uncertain for autistic woman

Unknown. Medical examiners need more tests to confirm the cause.

A post-mortem examination performed Monday on Christina Sankey, 29, an autistic woman who was found dead a day after she wandered away from her caregiver, was inconclusive, according to medical examiners.

Philadelphia Medical Examiner's Office spokesman Jeff Moran said lab tests could take eight to 10 weeks to establish the cause and manner of her death.

Sankey went missing from Macy's in Center City and was found dead the next morning on a West Philadelphia street almost five miles away.

Officers were flagged down by a citizen headed to work who saw a woman lying between two cars on the 1400 block of North 57th Street.

Central Detectives, which covers the area where Sankey was last seen, and Southwest Detectives, which covers the area where Sankey was found dead, are both investigating her death, a police spokeswoman said.

Mysterious death

Sankey, 29, who is autistic and can't speak, walked away from her caregiver at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 6.

- She was seen on surveillance video descending the escalator in Macy's at 13th and Market streets, alone.
- At 6:30 a.m. on Friday, March 7, she was found dead.

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Investigation

Victim shot seven times in Kensington

A man in his 30s was rushed to Temple University Hospital on Sunday night after he was shot seven times in Kensington.

The shooting happened about 9:30 p.m. on the 2900 block of Frankford Avenue, reports say. The victim was last reported to be in critical but stable condition.

Police were searching for a red minivan in connection with the shooting and took two men into custody after spotting the vehicle.

METRO

Northeast

Man stabs uncle with scissors

A 30-year-old man accused of stabbing his uncle with scissors is in custody, police said. The uncle, 42, was stabbed several times in the head, neck, face and chest. METRO

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EDUCATION TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT

Fukushima leads to new nuclear protections in Pa.

The unthinkable.
A nearby plant had issues three years after a meltdown in Japan, but Exelon enacted new rules.

Three years ago today, a tsunami caused by an earthquake led a nuclear meltdown at a plant in Fukushima, Japan.

Around 11:30 p.m. on March 4, an Exelon Corp. nuclear power plant in Limerick, Pa., about 20 miles northwest of Philadelphia, was shut down after one steam turbine valve malfunctioned and closed. The plant is still offline as repairs and testing continue.

"Operators in the control room monitor the plant 24 hours a day. When they received indicators that this had occurred, per procedures, they manually shut down the plant," said Exelon Limerick Generating Station communications manager Dana Melia.

Melia pointed out the valve malfunction, which prevented steam produced from nuclear rods heating water from getting out, occurred on the "non-nuclear" side of the plant.

While the Fukushima meltdown was directly caused by Japan's natural proximity to tectonic faultlines, which Pennsylvania does not have, Exelon Nuclear sought changes to make their plant safer after Fukushima.

They've added 17 diesel pumps at their nuclear facilities, and purchased response trucks, hose trailers, supplies and emergency communication equipment for potential emergency response, and are spending $400 million across the board, Melia said.

Quoted

"Three years after the events in Japan, Exelon's nuclear facilities are even better prepared for the unimaginable."
Melia

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Let the Weight Be Over!

For years, I would begin each day telling myself, *"Today is the day I start my diet,"* and I would end each day berating myself over my lack of self-control with food. I would always assure myself by saying *"I will do better tomorrow,"* but tomorrow never came, and I continued in a downward spiral! Plagued with hypertension, high cholesterol, sleep apnea, acid reflux disease, and an A1C value that had me knocking on diabetes' doorstep, I carried my weight with a smile – but behind that smile was genuine suffering.

"4 years and 86 lbs. after surgery, and I am the happiest and healthiest I have been in years!" –Jeanette

After gaining weight to the tune of 264 pounds, I decided to get real about my issues with food and my weight! I contacted the ***Center for Surgical Weight Loss*** at Hahnemann University Hospital and I never looked back.

Surgery was only the first step in my weight loss journey. I continue to renew my commitment daily by making proper food choices, exercising, and leading an active lifestyle. In fact, shortly after surgery, I took up Zumba. I loved it so much I have became a certified Zumba instructor!

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Dressed for the part

Nancy Schrag, a tour director from Wakarusa, Kansas, leads a group of students from Connecticut on a tour around Old City on Monday. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

New funding

Two schools to get $3M for 'turnaround'

W.D. Kelley Elementary in Brewerytown and Blaine Elementary in Strawberry Mansion will each receive $1.5 million from the Philadelphia School Partnership, the School Reform Commission said Monday. METRO

Bracelets

US Supreme court declines to hear 'I [heart] boobies' case

The Supreme Court declined to hear a school district's appeal over an attempt by officials to ban breast cancer awareness bracelets bearing the message "I [heart] boobies," handing victory to two students who challenged the decision on free speech.

The court's decision not to take up the case means that an August 2013 ruling by the Philadelphia-based 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in favor of the students is left intact. **REUTERS**

SXSW interactive

Snowden calls for intelligence oversight

NSA leaker Edward Snowden called for public oversight of U.S. intelligence programs during a Web-streamed speech at SXSW Interactive, one of the most anticipated segments of the technology conference. Snowden, appearing remotely from Russia where he remains in exile, urged attendees to take more control over how the various intelligence agencies interact with citizens. The speech marked the first time Snowden has addressed U.S. citizens directly since going into exile.

"South by Southwest and the tech community, the people in the room in Austin, they're the folks who can fix this," Snowden said. "We need public oversight, some way for trusted public figures to advocate for us." **NED EHRBAR**

Attorney general: Increase in heroin overdoses pose 'urgent public health crisis'

Volume. The bulk of heroin smuggled into the U.S. from Mexico has climbed in conjunction with increasing demand.

Heroin is cheaper and easier to buy than oxycodone. / GETTY IMAGES

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said his agency was stepping up efforts to stem sharp increases in deadly heroin overdoses, trafficking in the drug and abuse of prescription narcotics at the root of what he called an "urgent public health crisis."

As part of that campaign, Holder reiterated the Obama administration's call for more law enforcement agencies to train and equip personnel with a medication called naloxone, which reverses the effects of an overdose.

The director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy issued a similar plea to police and fire departments last month.

Holder said 17 states and the District of Columbia have amended their laws to increase access to naloxone, a blocking agent that can reverse the effects of an overdose and help restore breathing.

The rising level of heroin use in recent years stems from a corresponding epidemic in the abuse of prescription opiate-based painkillers, such as oxycodone, DEA officials say.

Many individuals who start out abusing oxycodone turn eventually to heroin as they build up a tolerance to the pain pills and find that they can buy heroin far more cheaply than prescription medications on the black market, experts say. **REUTERS**

Increase

45%

Heroin overdoses have increased 45 percent from 2006 to 2010.

Deaths

3,038

Heroin deaths reported in 2010, a 45 percent increase from 2006, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

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Jet search continues in 'unprecedented mystery'

No distress signal sent. Experts suggested a sudden catastrophic failure or explosion.

Military personnel scanning the sea aboard a Vietnamese Air Force aircraft taking part in a search mission for a missing Malaysia Airlines aircraft. / GETTY IMAGES

The disappearance of a Malaysian airliner about an hour into a flight to Beijing is an "unprecedented mystery," the civil aviation chief said on Monday, as a massive air and sea search now in its third day failed to find any trace of the plane.

Dozens of ships and aircraft from 10 countries scoured the seas around Malaysia and south of Vietnam as questions mounted over possible security lapses and whether a bomb or hijacking attempt could have brought down the plane.

The area of the search would be widened starting today, Azharuddin Abdul Rahman, the head of Malaysia's Civil Aviation Authority, told reporters.

A senior police official told Reuters that people armed with explosives and carrying false identity papers had tried to fly out of Kuala Lumpur in the past, and that current investigations were focused on two passengers who were on the missing plane with stolen passports.

"We have stopped men with false or stolen passports and carrying explosives, who have tried to get past KLIA [airport] security and get on to a plane," he said. "There have been two or three incidents, but I will not divulge the details." REUTERS

Quoted

"Unfortunately we have not found anything that appears to be objects from the aircraft, let alone the aircraft."
Azharuddin Abdul Rahman

Ukraine crisis. Obama and China's Xi focus on peaceful solution

President Barack Obama began a new week of diplomatic consultations on the Ukraine crisis with a phone call to Chinese President Xi Jinping that focused on a peaceful solution to Russia's military intervention.

Obama, who is set to meet Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk at the White House on Wednesday, is seeking ways to pressure Russian President Vladimir Putin to loosen Russia's grip on the Crimea region of southern Ukraine.

Obama spoke to Xi on Sunday night. China is a key ally of Russia and has heightened tensions with Japan by declaring an air defense zone over remote islands claimed by both countries in the East China Sea. REUTERS

Confrontation

Shots fired in air during raid at Crimea naval base

Unidentified armed men fired in the air as they moved into a Ukrainian naval post in Crimea on Monday in the latest confrontation since Russian military groups seized control of the Black Sea peninsula.

With diplomacy at a standstill, Russia said the United States had spurned an invitation to hold new talks on resolving the crisis, the worst East-West standoff since the Cold War. REUTERS

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Bitcoin exchange

Mt. Gox files for US bankruptcy to halt lawsuit

Mt. Gox, once the world's largest bitcoin exchange, filed for U.S. bankruptcy protection in Dallas late Sunday, a move that will temporarily halt U.S. legal action against the Japanese company.

Mt. Gox, which filed for bankruptcy protection in Japan in February, said without U.S. protection it would spend substantial funds defending itself against a U.S. lawsuit seeking class action status that was filed in federal court in Chicago.

The plaintiff leading the Chicago lawsuit was scheduled Tuesday to ask a federal judge to freeze Mt. Gox's U.S.-based servers and other computer equipment and to set up a trust over Mt. Gox's assets. REUTERS

US posts record public transit use

Light rail, or streetcars and trolleys, experienced a 1.6 percent increase in ridership. / GETTY IMAGES

Report. 2013 marked the highest level of ridership since 1956.

Americans took a record 10.7 billion trips on public transportation last year as an increase in urban living, costlier fuel, more investment and an economic upturn helped drive ridership, an industry group said on Monday.

2013 was the eighth straight year in which more than 10 billion trips were taken on public buses, subways, commuter rail and streetcars, the American Public Transportation Association said in a report.

"It's all about, if you build it, they will come. The investment pays off," APTA President and Chief Executive Michael Melaniphy said in a telephone interview.

Melaniphy said the increase in part reflected increased investment in public transit by the federal government. REUTERS

Increase in rail ridership

103.3

Salt Lake City had a 103.3 percent spike in commuter rail traffic.

37.3

Austin, Texas, had a 37.3 percent rise in commuter rail use.

29

New Orleans had a 29 percent rise in light rail use.

Interview. Newtown gunman's dad wishes son was never born.

The father of the gunman who killed 26 people at a Newtown, Conn., elementary school in 2012, said he wished his son had never been born, the New Yorker magazine reported on Monday.

Speaking publicly for the first time, Peter Lanza, father of shooter Adam Lanza, said: "You can't get any more evil. How much do I beat up on myself about the fact that he's my son? A lot."

Adam Lanza, 20, shot and killed 20 first-graders and six staff members at Newtown's Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012. Lanza, who committed suicide, also killed his mother, Nancy Lanza.

The rampage was one of the worst incidents of gun violence in U.S. history and sparked a national debate on gun control and school safety.

Quoted

"I want people to be afraid of the fact that this could happen to them."

Peter Lanza
In one of a series of interviews with the New Yorker

Peter Lanza told the New Yorker that he wished Adam had never been born and that there could be no remembering who he was, outside of who he became.

"That didn't come right away. That's not a natural thing, when you're thinking about your kid. But, God, there's no question," Lanza, a vice president for GE Energy Financial Services, said in one of a series of interviews with the New Yorker that started in September. REUTERS

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

It takes money to make money

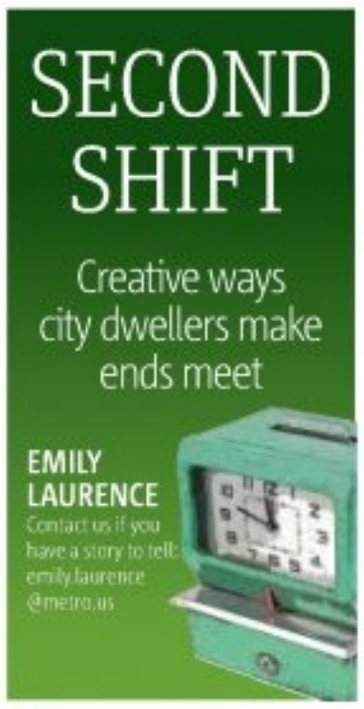
Work life.
Meet Latasha, a mental health care professional working three jobs and living in Brooklyn.

We all know living in a big city is expensive. How does the average person make it work? This week, meet Latasha, who works in the mental health field and has a side job doing psychotherapy so she can advance in her career.

Explain your three jobs.
My primary job is as a program coordinator at Visiting Nurse Service of New York in the behavioral health department. The hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., though I'm always on call. Then, at 4:30 p.m., I start my part-time job as a per diem social worker. I have a caseload of about 30 clients who I'm required to see twice. On Saturdays, I work my third job as a psychotherapist, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

So Sunday is your one day off a week?
Usually, but sometimes I have to do a home visit for my part-time social work job. But usually I'm off and that's when I get to do some shopping, clean my apartment and get my errands done.

As a program coordinator working in the mental health field, Latasha is on call 24/7. / COURTESY OF LATASHA WOODSON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Do you like all three of your jobs equally or are there jobs you wish you didn't have to work?
I've been working as a psychotherapist on Saturdays for about six years now, and I kind of wish I didn't have to work that job since it's on Saturday. Everybody else is going to brunch or they went out on Friday. I miss happy hours. I miss weekend getaways. But I have to keep that job so I can get to the next level in my career; I have to meet a certain number of hours. I'll finally meet the requirement in July.

YOLO

Do you work multiple jobs to make ends meet or to live the lifestyle you want?
It's definitely a lifestyle thing. Working in health care, I get a lot of time off, so I go on a lot of vacations. I totally believe YOLO, and I totally believe work hard, play hard.

So it's not really about the money. It's about the certification.
Yes, but honestly, I doubt I'll quit. Why would I pass up money that I'm able to put into my savings just to go spend money at brunch?

Where do you live?
I have a one-bedroom apartment in Bushwick, which I pay $1,800 a month for.

Do you ever think about moving somewhere cheaper?
Like where? I'm born and raised in New York. I tried to go the cheaper route once and moved to Virginia. I had a great job at a boarding school and was renting a two-bedroom house for, like, $500 a month. I was able to buy a car. It was insane. But I just couldn't do it. I was out there for 65 days and then I was ready to come back to New York.

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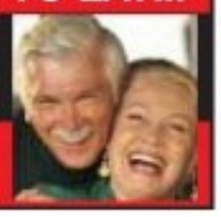

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TURNING EXPENSE TRACKING INTO REAL BUDGETING

"Track your expenses," says every financial guru who has ever posted on a blog or written a book. It's sound advice; keeping a record of what you spend is definitely better than not keeping a record. The problem comes when tracking expenses becomes routine (or automatic, thanks to free online tools). The early buzz of knowing where all your dollars go begins to wane, and you slide back into your old spending habits. Here's how to turn expense tracking into real budgeting.

Hit your target spending goals by using these three steps to set a budget. / COLOURBOX

Step 1

Use your detailed transaction history to get an idea of how much you spend in each area of your life. These are your budget categories, and your spending records give you a reasonable guess at how much of each paycheck you need to assign to each "job" in the budget.

Step 2

Identify your most important financial goal and give it a prominent place in your budget. Decide how much of each paycheck you'd like to assign to it.

Step 3

Every time you get paid, assign dollars to your biggest goal first, then divide the remainder among your other needs and wants.

Once you see that reducing spending in one area of your budget frees up cash for other goals, your total spending shifts into alignment with your real values. It feels like magic; many new budgeters report feeling like they got a raise. All because they put all their needs, wants and goals in front of themselves and made careful decisions about how many dollars each "budget job" deserved. And that's why you want to make the transition from a backward-looking expense tracker to a forward-looking budgeter. Your goals will thank you.

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author.

Quoted

"It's crucial to understand the difference between expense tracking and real budgeting."

YouNeedABudget.com

MARK BUTLER

Mark Butler is the director of outreach for YouNeedABudget.com. Send him your personal finance questions at emily.laurence@metro.us.

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Good advice. Learn how to make more money with the help of three entertaining podcasts.

Whatever your financial goals are, chances are making more money is part of the equation. But learning about stocks and bonds, smart shopping tips or budgeting can be a little, well, dull. We hunted down three podcasts that are both helpful and entertaining. Listen while you're at the gym, commuting, cooking or cleaning and get the ultimate pay off — more money in the bank.

Tuning into one of these podcasts once a week will take your money managing to the next level. / COLOURBOX

Best for budgeting tips

"The Money Guy $how": If you want to learn tricks and sneaky ways to save on things like your cable bill, grocery shopping, booking travel and more, this podcast is the one for you.

Hosts Brian Preston and Bo Hanson keep the topics entertaining by having conversations about them while working in the tips instead of just rattling off advice.

Preston and Hanson have a lot to say about managing a budget for an entire family, so if you are trying to balance your kids' needs while still having enough money to enjoy some personal indulgences, it's worth giving their weekly show a listen.

Best for investing

"The Value Guys!": The hosts of this podcast have been working on Wall Street for more than 30 years and work for big-time firms, but have to keep their identities under wraps so their employers don't find out. Behind this veil of mystery comes candid advice about the best stocks to invest in.

While "The Value Guys!" identities may be a mystery, it's no secret that they know what they're talking about.

Whether you are just curious about learning how to play the game or have been doing it for years, the episodes have something to offer all levels of investors.

They break things down in simple terms while explaining what more complicated ones mean so you can dig deeper later on your own time. EMILY LAURENCE

Listen to this

Best for managing your money

"Feed The Pig": This podcast is for people in their 20s and 30s, so the tips are directly applicable to your life now. The weekly episodes center around topics such as how to tackle credit card debt, start investing or saving money to buy a home. It's basically a "get your s—t together" PSA sponsored by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Ad Council — and we mean that in the best way possible.

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A college try with a Posse to help

Together. The POTUS-approved Posse Program has helped thousands of young people attend college.

Monique Nelson (above), Ryan Letada (inset upper right) and Ronald German (inset lower right). / PROVIDED

Thanks to the Posse Foundation, high-achieving high schoolers who may have otherwise fallen through the cracks are getting a chance at higher education. Through the program's partner colleges and universities, students admitted into 10-person Posse groups attend participating schools and rely on their multicultural teams and mentors for support.

Since its inception in 1989, the Posse Foundation has sent 5,500 students to college and awarded $670 million in scholarships. We asked three alumni about how the program shaped their experiences. Ronald Germán, who is a senior associate at State Street Corporation in Boston and graduated Hamilton College in 2013 with a degree in Hispanic studies. Over in Brooklyn, alumni Monique Nelson puts her degree from Vanderbilt University to work as the chairman and CEO of the multicultural marketing company, UniWorld Group. And Ryan Letada, a 2008 graduate of Wheaton College, is the co-founder of NextDayBetter in New York City.

How has this program changed your life?

Germán: "Posse provided opportunities to develop my leadership potential both on campus and in the professional world."

Nelson: "It's given me the ability to seamlessly work with others; to inform and to educate; to make sure there is a win-win scenario most of the time; and to always remember that the most valuable assets of any organization are the people and the culture."

Letada: "I am a social entrepreneur today because of Posse Foundation. I am using my business acumen and creativity to help solve the most pressing societal problems facing diaspora communities like the Philippines."

Advice

What advice would you give to high school students now in the program?

Germán: "Posse is more than just the scholarship money. The relationships that one creates, the professional exposure one obtains and the leadership skills that one develops exceed the financial benefits."

Nelson: "Experience everything, make an impact no matter how small and have fun doing it."

VICKI SALEMI
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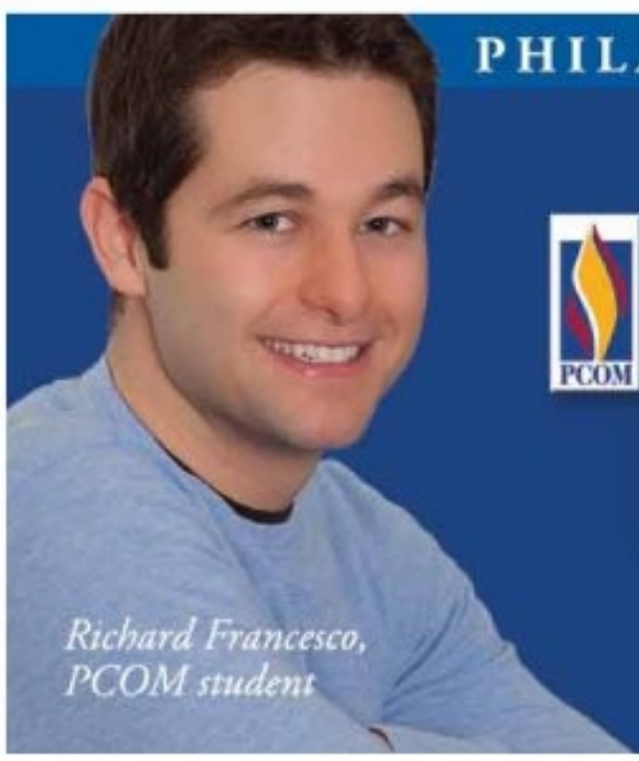

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2 CULTURE

Twitter feed

Today, Elizabeth Hurley is excited about the season, Neil Patrick Harris is giving his kids some culture, Pam Grier is asking the tough questions and Lena Dunham is second-guessing herself.

@ElizabethHurley: Full of the joys of Spring. Chickens, parrot, dogs and alpacas fed. Lap top open and espresso on the way.

@ActuallyNPH: Took the kids to their first Broadway show today: the Lion King. Mine was 25 years ago: Les Miserables. It's the circle of life...

@PamGrier: Does the World Need Pop-Tarts?

@lenadunham: I just made and deleted a not so great molestation joke. Sorry guys. I am really sleepy.

Moss: Marriage was 'extremely traumatic and awful and horrible'

Appearances are deceiving. / ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

"Mad Men" star Elisabeth Moss, 31, really, really, really (and we mean "really") wasn't a fan of her eight-month marriage to "Portlandia" star Fred Armisen, 47.

"Looking back, I feel like I was really young, and at the time I didn't think that I was that young," Moss said of her relationship with Armisen in her new cover story with New York Magazine. The two divorced each other in 2010. "It was extremely traumatic and awful and horrible," she noted.

Add that to the time she said this about Armisen last year — "One of the greatest things I heard someone say about him is, 'He's so great at doing impersonations. But the greatest impersonation he does is that of a normal person'" — and, well, we don't have to ask her what she really thinks about the whole affair. At least we hope the wedding presents were cool?

THE WORD

Dorothy Robinson takes on the world of gossip.

DOROTHY ROBINSON
@dorothyatmetro
dorothy.robinson@metro.us

Don't do it, Selena Gomez!

Selena Gomez is back with her bad-boy boyfriend Justin Bieber, RadarOnline.com reports. And her parents are none too pleased. "It's definitely against her parents' wishes," a source dished to the site. "But they don't have any control over her. She's pulling the, 'Who makes the money around here?' card. It's a s— show behind the scenes."

The Disney star checked in and out of rehab in January of this year. "The partying was, at times, wild. [Her parents] wanted to help her — and they very much encouraged her to go to rehab," says the source. "Others very close to her also urged her to seek professional help."

For now, Mama and Papa Gomez are at a loss — so they have resorted to simply chaperoning the two. "They're doing their best to supervise them. They're tolerating it as long as they know that there is someone who has eyes on them all the time," says the source.

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Like a virgin

Interview. Alan Tudyk hits SXSW for the first time with the "Groundhog Day"-like comedy "Premature."

"Firefly" and "Frozen" star Alan Tudyk has had films that have come to SXSW, but he's never accompanied them. The Texas native makes his in-person debut with "Premature," a "Groundhog Day"-style story about a teen trapped in the same day. The difference here is the day keeps resetting every time he masturbates. Tudyk wants to make it very clear, though, that he doesn't play said teen.

ALAN TUDYK
FILMMAGIC

How many SXSWs have you experienced?
This is the first one that I've been to when I have something here. "Tucker & Dale vs. Evil" came here, but I wasn't able to come. But I love Austin. I'm from Dallas originally, and I'd come down here a lot. It's one of the greatest towns ever. I love it because I'm from Texas, and I can sense the Texas. It's a familiar feeling, Texas. It's a good feeling, immediately. Anywhere in Texas there's a feeling of home. But when you think of Texas you don't think of a bunch of hippies — not that it's only hippies. But you know, they say, "Keep Austin weird." It's just … expressive.

I'm sure you know that people in Portland, Ore., have co-opted that saying, making it, "Keep Portland weird."
Their slogan is actually, "Keep stealing slogans from other towns." That's their slogan.

This movie, "Premature," is, let's say, a very original film. How was it pitched to you?
I guess it was "'Groundhog Day' but with premature ejaculation." That's pretty much how you explain it. And with the subject matter as it is, it's actually pretty heartwarming. And I don't know how you pull that off. It's not easy, making it not just a completely crass movie.

And then how do you explain it to friends?
Like that, really. It's about a kid who [orgasms] … real easy. Again and again and again and again, in a lot of different ways. And then I have to immediately state that I'm not the guy who orgasms — nor do I portray the orgasm or any part of that. [Laughs]

metro goes to SXSW March 7-15 Austin 2014 Film Interactive

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An inauspicious debut

Newcomer John Karna is a self-pleasuring teenager in 'Premature'

John Karna may be new to this whole starring-in-a-movie thing, but he's not letting it show. "This is my first paid movie gig, which is pretty awesome. I learned a crazy amount while on-set," he says of "Premature," about a teenager (Karna) stuck reliving the same terrible day, waking up back in his bed that morning every time he masturbates. The role proved to have some interesting challenges, as it turns out.

JOHN KARNA SPENDS SOME OF "PREMATURE" IN HIS UNDIES.
FILMNATION ENTERTAINMENT

How prepared were you for the, shall we say, level of exposure involved with this role?
I will say, it was something that I thought at first, "I don't know, I've never done this before." And then the minute you're walking around in your underwear, it's very freeing. You connect to the crew in a way that you could never connect while fully clothed, I think. We were all cool with each other. By the end of it we were all just in our underwear shooting a movie, which was great.

The tone of this movie is quite well done. It really tries to balance the raunch with some sweetness.
It read like a John Hughes movie. [Director Dan Beers] wanted it to have the same heart of a John Hughes movie, but with the sensibilities of the teenagers of our day. There's a lot more masturbation, for example. Making the movie I was like, "I masturbated every once in a while." I am shocked by how much my character masturbates in the movie.

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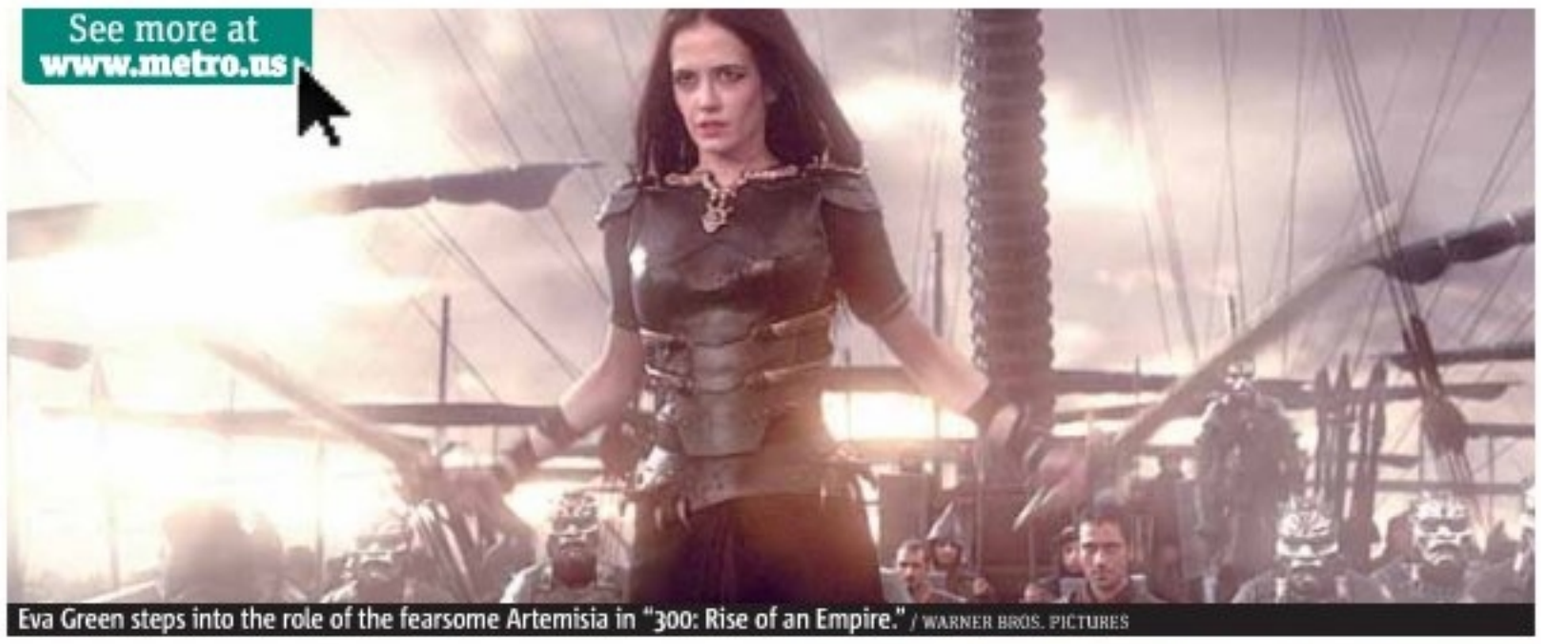

Eva Green steps into the role of the fearsome Artemisia in "300: Rise of an Empire." / WARNER BROS. PICTURES

EVA GREEN

The "300: Rise of an Empire" star talks playing a villain and her reluctance to take off her shirt for art.

BREAKING BAD

WIREIMAGE

Eva Green was really looking for an all-out villain to sink her teeth into. She got that and more with the role of Artemisia in "300: Rise of an Empire." Green ("The Dreamers," "Casino Royale") sat down with us to discuss playing nuts, using sex as a weapon and the allure the mystical side of things.

You're playing a real villain here.
Yes, I kill people and I'm not very nice. [Laughs] It's pure villainy. You know, lots of actors will go, "No, she has cracks, she's human." And of course you learn about her backstory and how she's been betrayed by her own countrymen and it has kind of hardened her heart big time. The only challenge is to find maybe some jubilation in this because yeah, she's just mental. She has no conscience and she can't tolerate incompetence, and anybody who doesn't follow her orders, just: "Off with his head!" You can't do that in real life, really.

Not for very long, at least.
No. [Laughs] I think everybody would like to do that sometimes. She's just so dark, she doesn't care. She's so disrespectful. She's a real baddie.

You also have probably one of the more aggressive sex scenes in this.
I mean, it's more of a fight scene than a sex scene, really. It's so violent that it was kind of staged as a fight scene. I love when it's kind of clinical. Even a normal sex scene, they go: "You put your hand here and you go here." "How do you do? We're going to have sex." [Laughs] And here it's two warriors having sex. They deal with violence every day, and this is how they do it. It's kind of S&M without the leather. It's not very romantic, let's say.

As a professional actress, how do you know when screen nudity is worth it? This isn't a Bertolucci film.
Of course I never do things where I'm like, "Oh yeah, I'd like to show my boobs!" You always feel very vulnerable. I remember when the Bertolucci film ["The Dreamers"] came out, that's the only thing that people talked about. I mean, it is about sexuality and the awakening of the senses, whatever, but I was like, "Why?" In this, it's kind of a weapon. She thinks that if she f—s him, maybe he would join her and fight with her.

NED EHRBAR
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The tube

You're also wrapping up filming on your new Showtime series, "Penny Dreadful." How's that going?
This one, psychologically, it's hard. I love it, but it's so intense that I can't wait to lie down on a beach and have a tequila very soon. [Laughs] I might end up in a cuckoo home after this TV series. But I know how to read the future with tarot cards now, which is kind of cool, to connect with the universe and all this, the elements — it sounds like kind of witchcraft, but it makes you [become] more aware of yourself and be connected to the Earth. I'm not a professional, obviously, but I've done some good readings. Even to myself, I'll do it. It helps you. To learn how to combine all those cards together ... it's quite fascinating.

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KICK BACK WITH JOHN WAYNE IN THE SAFARI FILM 'HATARI!'

'Hatari!'

Paramount, $19.98

The films of Howard Hawks have great stories, and even great storytelling. But they're fundamentally hang-out movies. Even a twisty noir like "The Big Sleep" or a Western titan like "Rio Bravo" function more as great scenes than well-spun yarns. As he reached the end of his career, Hawks stripped everything down to pure momentary pleasures. "Hatari!" — the filmmaker's fifth-to-last outing from 1962 — was actually created without any overreaching story to connect its episodes. Credited screenwriter Leigh Brackett didn't mean it well when she recalled that "he didn't want plot, he just wanted scenes."

Granted, it's not for everyone, being a 159-minute vacation in East Africa, offering viewers the chance to hob-nob with those who catch wild animals and sell them to zoos. There's a lot of adventure, including a rhinoceros chase and doings with a giraffe and baby elephants. And in front of an international cast is John Wayne, who would call it the most fun he ever had making a picture. Whether the good times extend to the audience depends on the individual audience members. Get into its leisurely vibe, and it's heaven; if you can't, it's almost certainly a slog, albeit an undeniably gorgeous one.

Even more so than any of his other pictures, "Hatari!" has the room for Hawks and his cast to stretch out, pull up a chair and sip on a drink, unencumbered by anything but the occasional, rip-roaring trek. One on hand, it's almost avant-garde in how little plot it has. On the other, it's a literal definition of escapist cinema.

DISC JOCKEY
MATT PRIGGE
matt.prigge@metro.us

Back in the day

'George Washington'

Director David Gordon Green had an odd sideline from moody indies to mainstream comedies ("Pineapple Express," "Your Highness"). But he's back with low-budgets now, with the Nicolas Cage-starring "Joe" forthcoming. And his stunning 2000 debut — a rhapsodic look at low-income kids — is now on Blu-ray.

Also out

'Out of the Furnace'

Slipped into theaters to take advantage of its name cast, this is actually a gruesomely bleak drama in a Joe Thompson/Cormac McCarthy vein, with Christian Bale trying to save his brother (Casey Affleck) from redneck meth monsters.

'Giant'

For size, "Hatari!" has nothing on George Stevens' 1956 monstrosity, which follows Rock Hudson's Texas oil baron battling a noveau riche baron (James Dean, in his final turn) over some 3 ½ hours.

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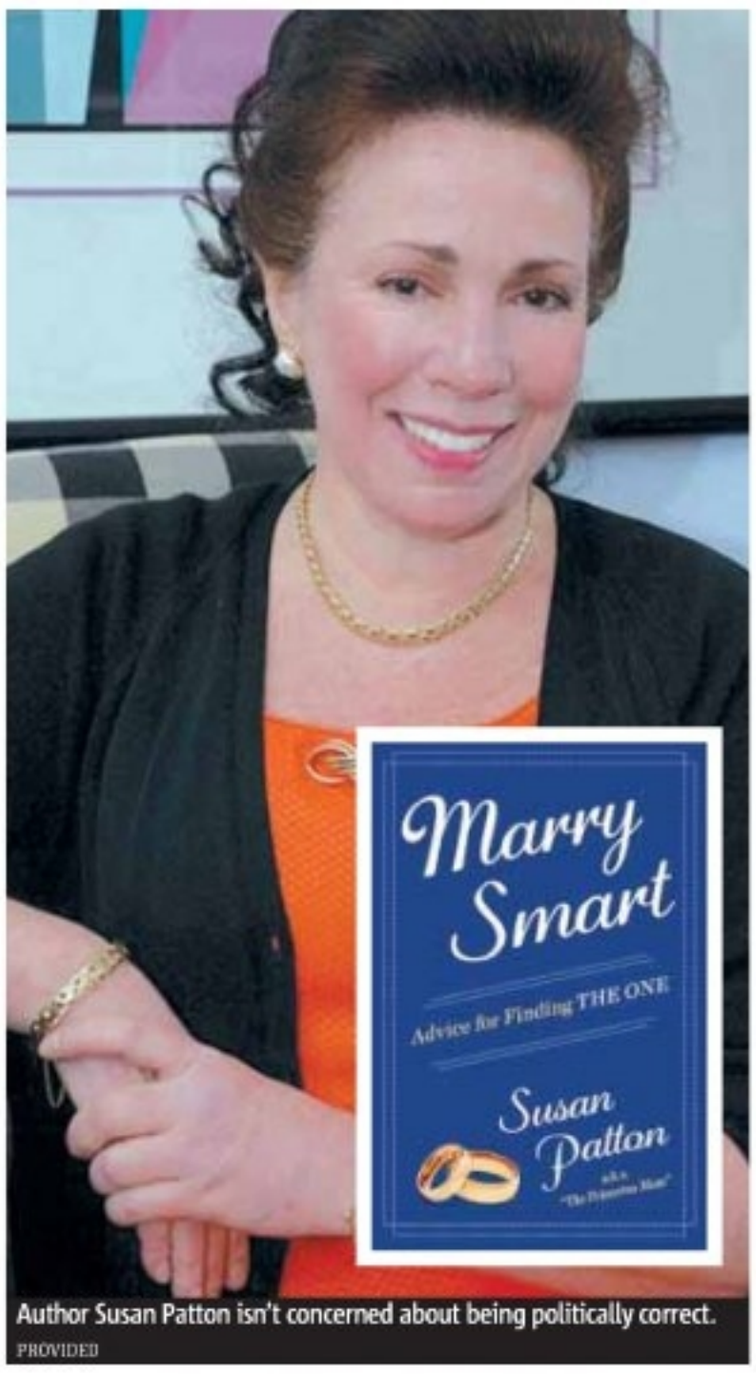

Author Susan Patton isn't concerned about being politically correct.
PROVIDED

Unpopular opinion. Think "Tiger Mom" is controversial? "Princeton Mom" and "Marry Smart" author Susan Patton has her beat.

Susan Patton, better known as "The Princeton Mom," admits in her new book, "Marry Smart: Advice for Finding The One," that she was "born without a politically correct gene."

And that's paid off for Patton. After her open letter ("Find a husband before you graduate") — originally sent to her alma mater, Princeton University — went viral, Patton landed herself a book deal.

Most of Patton's beliefs are politically incorrect — some, shockingly so.

"I think date rape is a fallacy," she says. "To refer to sex that a woman really didn't feel like having but wound up having anyway because she didn't know how to leave or regrets it — that's not rape of any sort. That's sex you wish you didn't have. That's mistake sex." This idea is an expansion on a chapter in Patton's book called "Behaving Badly." Here's a hint: She's talking about women, not men.

Given this rhetoric, it's not surprising that Patton rejects feminism. "I certainly am an early beneficiary of the good works of the feminist movement," she allows. "I used to think a feminist was somebody who believed women should be afforded equal opportunities and rights to men. It might have started that way, but it's gone to the dark side. It's an extreme position of demanding independence from men and looking at them as unnecessary. This is terrible for women."

Oddly enough, some of what Patton says is spoken like a true feminist. "A man's not going to make you happy," she says. "You have to make yourself happy." For Patton, finding a husband is largely a means to an end — having a father for your child.

"If you don't want to have children or be married, then this book is probably not for you," she says. Patton even says if having children isn't a top priority, then "take your time. Date however many men you want."

"Rules" to follow

Patton's marriage plot

Patton's advice to women who do want children? "Be nice. Learn how to cook. Dress nicely. Learn how to be a good girlfriend. Be sweet. What's wrong with any of that?" she asks. Just don't wait until you're 32: "Then it's absolutely time to settle for Mr. Good Enough."

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Sue Monk Kidd's tips for writing your first book

Make it happen. The "Secret Life of Bees" author reveals how it's done.

See more at www.metro.us

"WRITING [A BOOK] TAKES DISCIPLINE," SUE MONK KIDD SAYS.
ROLAND SCARPA

So many people have writing a book on their bucket list, but they have no idea how to actually do it. Hearing about the J.K. Rowlings of the world who make millions off their first attempt sure is inspiring, but is it likely?

It happens, and you don't have to be a career writer for it to happen to you. Sue Monk Kidd didn't publish her first book, "Secret Life of Bees," until she was 53 years old, and it landed on the New York Times best-sellers list and was turned into a movie. Her new book, "The Invention of Wings," also became a best-seller.

"When I started writing fiction, I told myself I would give myself seven years to really learn [how to do it]. Historically, that's how long someone worked as an apprentice to learn a skill, so that's why I decided to give myself that amount of time." Kidd immersed herself in studying great fiction and surrounding herself by good fiction writers, soaking up everything they could teach her.

To find her own voice rather than emulating others, Kidd started writing every day. To write her book, she truly treated it as her career, working on it from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., five days a week. "I think writers have their own ways of approaching their work and they are very different. You have to find what works for you," she says.

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Passion project

It's not easy

Regardless of the routine you set for yourself, Kidd stresses that writing a book takes discipline. There will be times when you don't feel like writing, but if you don't push through, it will never get done.

"You have to believe in your vision and be committed to it," Kidd says. "Allow yourself the freedom to find what fascinates you and really believe in that."

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Spring break stats

The Top 10 spring break destinations for college students this year:

- Las Vegas
- New Orleans
- Denver
- New York
- San Diego
- Chicago
- Panama City Beach
- Orlando
- Dallas
- Nashville

Source: Priceline.com

Spring into break

Take care of the nitty gritty now and this can be you. / COLOURBOX

Info. All you need to know before you head out on spring break.

Spring break season is in full swing, but just because the popular travel window is famous for its throngs of coeds doesn't mean everyone can't benefit from a little R&R this time of year.

To help vacation-bound travelers navigate the weary waters of March travel, Metro grabbed some tips from Mark Murphy, New Jersey-based travel expert and publisher of TravelPulse.com and Vacation Agent magazine.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
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morgan.rousseau@metro.us

Paris in the spring

Is late winter/early spring typically a busy travel time?

"It depends on the destination. If you're talking about the Caribbean, cruises or Mexico, yes, those areas are booming. But if you're talking about Europe, not really, which means you'll get great discounts," says Murphy.

For fun in the sun

Wait it out

Murphy recommends waiting until the weeks after spring break and Easter to get the better deals in coed-crawling places like the Caribbean. In the U.S., certain places in Florida – like Fort Lauderdale and South Beach — provide good value. If you opt for staying stateside, Murphy recommends booking the off-peak days of the week to save some cash.

"Come in on a Sunday and leave on a Thursday," he suggests.

The advantage of taking a flight to Cancun and other tropical destinations is that you can stay in all-inclusive resorts. It costs more to get there, but you save money.

If you want to save money on airfare and go someplace warm (and who doesn't?), look at cruise lines that sail out of Boston and New York, which also provide all-inclusive packages.

Book smart

Use your resources

For tech-savvy travelers, Murphy's best advice may come as a shock.

"There are these people called travel agents," he quips. "It's the most obvious secret in travel booking. People feel they can do it themselves, until they screw it up — they overpay and realize they could have gotten a suite for the same price."

The reason: Travel today is specialized, says Murphy. There are agents who specialize in cruises, and others who focus on family-friendly trips. The agents have special relationships with their suppliers, which means opportunities for free upgrades, access to car service and discounts.

But heed caution: "Not all are good," he says.

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Parenting. Christine Schmidt, founder of Yellow Owl Workshop, gives her tips on balancing a career with being a mom.

Christine Schmidt poses with her daughter next to some of her designs. / PROVIDED

Starting your own business can seem overwhelming, especially if you have kids. We talk to one woman who made it happen, Yellow Owl Workshop founder Christine Schmidt. Use her words as inspiration to take the next step in your career, whether it's working toward a promotion or starting a business of your own.

How did you get the idea to start Yellow Owl Workshop? Do you have a business background?
I have the opposite of a business background — I went to art school! Although I studied fine art, it taught me lessons I use every day in business. I learned how to work with tiny budgets and practical timelines, how to value craft and originality, and the importance of asking questions. Most importantly, I had time to build trust in my own creative vision. I began printing stationery by hand in my basement because the only major cost was my time.

Were you nervous about having the time to be both a mom and own a business?
I consider myself lucky to be able to afford child care. For many caretakers, these options are not available. I will say that I am very satisfied with my full life — even if I am tired and wearing old paint-stained maternity leggings. There are days where I drop the ball at work and days I bawl because I've missed something special with my daughter. She just turned 2 and I'm just now learning to forgive myself and work through those guilts.

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How to stay sane

1 **Ask for help.** You will be most productive doing things that you are passionate about and assigning tasks to others when you can.

2 **Don't compare yourself to others.** Nobody else is in your exact same circumstance, so judge yourself kindly and don't look back.

3 **Give yourself a damn break!** Take some time to be neither a parent nor a business owner, even if it's just taking a bath or watching garbage TV.

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Horoscope

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Children will help you see the lighter side of life. If you're honest, you will avoid questions.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. Nothing will be able to hold. It's important to keep an open mind. Consider the solutions being offered by others. Respect the opinions of colleagues.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. You are likely to take on too much today. Look for possible changes that could help you cut corners, and delegate more jobs to free up some time.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. You will be given an opportunity to increase your income. Look at an old problem in a new light to find a way to advance.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. After much deliberation, you now have the knowledge and resources to make positive changes in your life. Overcome your fear of failure and take the plunge.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. You will receive a financial gain. Legal issues are in the process of being resolved. The plan you are involved in should be kept secret.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. You will be successful today, provided you have documentation in place. Keep a close eye on your competitors.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. You have the power of persuasion on your side. Don't wait for events to transpire. Present your ideas to those in a position to help you.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. After much hard work, you will realize your ambitions. Maintain your current course and ignore those who try to change your mind.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. An old friend will come back into the picture. Love is in the air. Spice up your personal life by offering romance.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan 20. You may need to make some alterations in your quest to move ahead. Find a more imaginative way to present your ideas.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb 18. Take care of nagging health issues by making medical appointments that you've been postponing. You will need to be at your best. BERNICE BEDE OSOL

Sudoku: Easy and hard

8								4
		5	4			7	1	
		3	5	6			8	2
	8		3	5				
		7				6		
				8	7		4	
3	6			2	9	1		
	1	8			6	4		
2								6

	2	7	3					
9	4	8		1			3	2
3	1				9			
4			1			6		
		9			6			8
			7				6	1
1	5			8		3	2	7
					1	4	9	

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Letters

Fashion not a woman's best friend

Re: 'Not your mom's jeans' (Metro, March 10)
I am not familiar with "mom jeans" other than the name. I wondered why they were used as an example of "bad fashion." So they are "too baggy." Probably, it is because they allow leg movement. I have communicated with other women on websites meant for women who love outdoor activities, and love comfortable clothing meant for function, not fashion. Even so-called active-wear has "low rises" that pinch and are tight, shirts have "princess seams" making it hard to move, etc.

Stop it, clothing manufacturers. We think men have a better deal with plain, simple designs.
LUCY MARTINEZ, VIA EMAIL

Get excited about the paralympics

This was my second time being in the United States while the Olympics were on. I was very pleased to see all the media reports about them and how proud the country was with Team USA — and they should be. Both times I was equally excited about watching the paralympics or Special Olympics, but the media weren't covering it.
SOFIA ALANIS, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us

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Crossword

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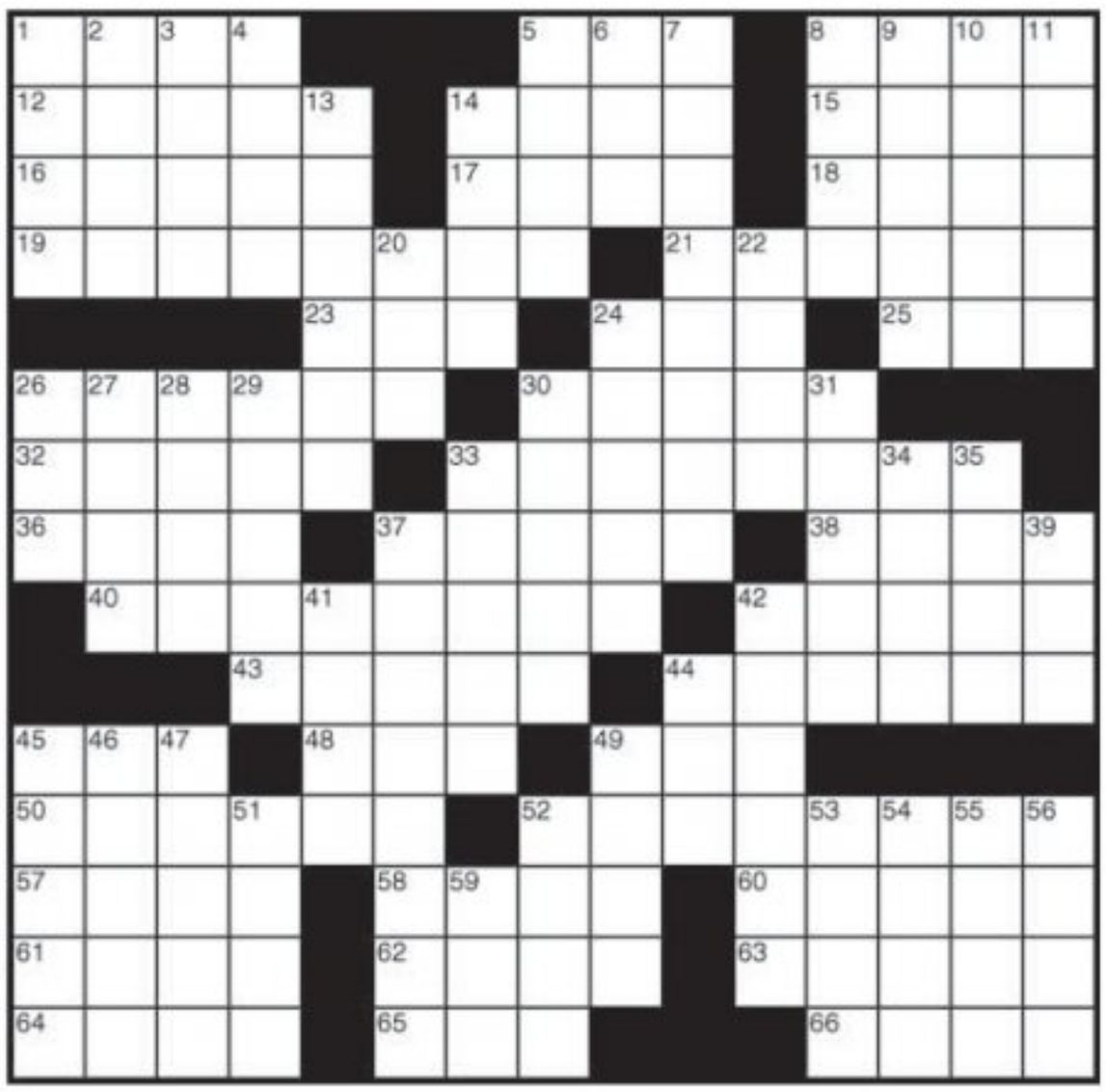
5 Fast-food acronym
8 Term paper abbr. (2 wds.)
12 Hotel employee
14 Waterproof
15 Exploding star
16 Helen, in Madrid
17 Pakistan's language
18 Network
19 Type of flute
21 Frame of mind
23 In vogue
24 Annapolis org.
25 "I've been—!"
26 Vacillate
30 Haggling point
32 Field glass's lens
33 Xenon or krypton (2 wds.)
36 Ding-a- —
37 Raid
38 Felt bad about
40 Stump
42 Whodunit or romance
43 — -craftsy
44 Teen occupation
45 Oola's guy
48 Corroded, as acid
49 Dune buggy kin
50 Seven-veil dancer
52 Squad cars
57 Fermi split it
58 Obscure corner
60 Prickly pear
61 Military cap
62 Joule fractions
63 Ms. Garbo
64 Helper, briefly
65 Old PC system
66 Pair of mules

Down
1 Done with
2 Turn white
3 Obi-Wan player
4 Late-night Jay
5 "The Galloping Gourmet"
6 Brief craze
7 Awkwardly
8 Bridge bldr.
9 Rabbi's reading
10 St. Teresa's town
11 Took on cargo
13 Landing strip
14 Hired a lawyer
20 Big name in chemicals
22 A single time
24 Kind of sprawl
26 Roman sun god
27 Saga
28 Vulcan's forge
29 Sweater letter
30 "— and Bess"
31 Long-plumed heron
33 Unwanted sound
34 First cousin's mom
35 Withered
37 Ready for market
39 "The," to Freud
41 Wheels for nanny
42 Open-hearted
44 Good name for a cook?
45 Honshu port
46 Joyce Carol—
47 Falls softly
49 Havens
51 Exclude
52 Machine teeth
53 Variety
54 "En garde" weapon
55 Pro — (in proportion)
56 Criticize harshly
59 Spanish gold

Yesterday's answer



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Cataldi on tanking

Time to root against the Sixers, Flyers

It's time for me to make an embarrassing confession about the exploits of Philadelphia's winter sports teams. I am rooting against both of them — every game, every day. I want the Sixers to finish the season with 36 straight losses, and I hope the Flyers miss the playoffs.

Now before you brand me a traitor, please follow my logic. The Sixers are actively rooting against themselves right now, in the long-term interest of the team. If they really wanted to win, they would never have traded Evan Turner and Spencer Hawes before the deadline. They want a top draft pick.

The Flyers are a more perplexing case because, as usual, they show flashes of promise. But let's be honest here. The Flyers are not good enough. They stand almost no chance if they face Boston in the playoffs, and absolutely no hope against any of the powers from the West. Chairman Ed Snider needs tangible proof that his old ways don't work anymore.

So here's my credo for the last two months of the season: Go, opponents! **ANGELO CATALDI**

PHILLIES ARE A MESS AS OPENING DAY NEARS

The Phillies will not win the World Series in 2014. They will not make the playoffs, they will not win the division and they will not even have a winning record. I offer these predictions after a week in Clearwater, where the sun is shining everywhere but at Bright House Field.

There is nothing about the current edition of the Phils that suggests success. The lineup is too old, too young and far too flawed. The bullpen is barren. And the starting rotation is hardly a comfort these days, either. These Phillies are closer to the hideous 2014 Sixers than to their own 2008 champions.

And by far the biggest problem with this team is a stunning lack of basic intelligence. These Phillies don't make smart decisions. These Phillies have a Penn grad as president (Dave Montgomery) and a Stanford man as GM, and they can't get the simplest things right.

For example, Cole Hamels was shut down with more arm issues last Thursday, issues that will deny the team their ace for the first month of the season, if not much longer. At this point, Ruben Amaro Jr. still won't even acknowledge that Hamels is injured. The GM keeps referring to the problem as just a minor condition common among pitchers.

Chase Utley's optimism will be tested when the 2014 season kicks off on March 31. / GETTY IMAGES

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ANGELO CATALDI

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Two days before the setback, Hamels sat next to me in the press box and said he felt fine. The very next day, he said throwing 35 pitches "felt like throwing 1,000." Once again, a feeble spring medical cover-up had failed.

The official diagnosis remains bicep tendinitis, but how can anyone be sure without an MRI, something Hamels has not received since the discomfort arose last October? When I asked Amaro about avoiding the one diagnostic tool that would eliminate all doubt, he scoffed.

"This is a $25 million (a year) pitcher," he said. "If we had any question, don't you think we'd do the MRI?"

Under normal conditions, the answer would be yes, but after previous medical misfires with Chase Utley, Ryan Howard and Roy Halladay, there are no safe bets with these Phillies. Nothing they do seems logical anymore.

Miguel Alfredo Gonzalez, the $48 million Cuban pitcher (later discounted to $12 million) looks absolutely terrible. Darin Ruf, the best hitter this spring, has no position to play. And then there was the Phils' absurd decision to report two of their draft picks to the NCAA for using agents – which they now admit "we could have handled better."

Three weeks before the start of a new season, the Phillies are a mess. Despite my recent plea for optimism, I have returned from spring training with a darker message. I see no immediate hope for the future, no silver lining at all — after a week in sunny Clearwater.

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author.

3 SPORTS

Eagles look for 'D'

NFL free agency opens at 4 p.m.

The Eagles are likely to be seeking defensive help when NFL free agency officially begins Tuesday at 4 p.m. Among the top names at safety, a position the Eagles are looking to improve on in 2014 is the Bills' Jairus Byrd. Other safety options for the Birds include the Browns' T.J. Ward, the Saint's Malcolm Jenkins and the Panthers' Mike Mitchell.

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Idle thoughts

- As part of our visit to Clearwater last week, WIP radio was given a chance to select someone to throw out the first pitch at a Phillies exhibition game. A 74-year-old woman won the honor and promptly threw a strike. In other words, she has been more impressive on the mound so far than Miguel Alfredo Gonzalez.
- The Phillies have no peer when it comes to honoring one of their own. The ceremony for the late Jim Fregosi last week was extraordinary. They absolutely must repeat it early in the season back in Philadelphia.
- Larry Bowa said one of his biggest frustrations as a coach has been watching two of his students, Jimmy Rollins and Robinson Cano, not hustle on every play. As the new bench coach, he has been harassing Rollins about it all spring.

Cataldi. Eagles' Avant will be missed for more than his on-field play.

Jason Avant ranks No. 13 all-time in receiving yards and No. 5 all-time in games played in an Eagles uniform. / GETTY IMAGES

Jason Avant was never important enough for fans to embrace, or for the media to immortalize. He was just a good player and a very good man, in a time when only great or terrible merit our full attention.

Last week, Avant's eight-year tenure as an Eagle ended when he was released in anticipation of the team adding a younger, faster wide receiver in a draft spilling over with them. The record shows that he caught 297 passes for 3626 yards, ordinary numbers for an extraordinary contributor.

Avant is a classic case of a player whose impact extended well beyond the field or the stat sheet. In the private confines of the clubhouse, he was a confidant to many teammates, a coach without the title, and a baby sitter to the most rambunctious of all Eagles, DeSean Jackson.

When Riley Cooper was caught in the middle of a racial crisis last summer, Jason Avant quieted the storm. If a fellow wide receiver said Cooper was OK, who was going to dispute that perspective? Avant, a proud African-American who was competing with Cooper for the ball, put his team first. He always did.

At the end, he walked away with a sense of dignity that typified his time in Philadelphia. He lamented the arrival of a loud Chip Kelly offense that doesn't emphasize his quiet skills, but not in a bitter way. Instead, he offered a postscript that reflected his character.

"At the end of the day," he said, "you want your significance to have more effect on what you did outside the field. . . . I just hope the fans would know that I respect them, and that I care for them, and that I thought about them when I was playing."

The Eagles aren't the only ones who are going to miss Jason Avant. We all are. **ANGELO CATALDI**

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Phillies can't locate offense

MLB. The Phillies are batting below the Mendoza line so far in spring training.

The Phillies mixed things up Monday against the Braves, batting Ryan Howard fifth. He went 0-for-2 with a walk. / GETTY IMAGES

There's an old line about how players shouldn't leave all of their hits in spring training. Either the Phillies are abiding by that ancient axiom or the club's offense is frighteningly inept. It's still early in the Grapefruit League world but there's cause for concern after the Phillies ugly 8-1 loss to the Atlanta Braves, the only team in baseball with a worst spring training record, entering the contest.

The Phillies entered the game with an abysmal .194 average, which is the worst in the MLB, and finished with just a run and six paltry hits. A number of key players are below the Mendoza line. Ryan Howard is hitting .182, Chase Utley (.158), Jimmy Rollins (.133) and Domonic Brown (.091.) have yet to find a groove.

"The first two weeks the pitchers are ahead of the hitters, who are trying to get their timing down," Marlon Byrd said.

That's easy for Byrd, who is hitting .375, to say.

Yankees manager Joe Girardi not only backs Byrd but thinks the Phillies offense will get there.

"The Phillies have so many veterans, who know what spring training is all about," Girardi said. "Give that offense three weeks to get it together. They'll use the time they have to get it going. I remember our 2009 team (which won the World Series against the Phillies) was filled with veterans and they turned it on when they needed it to. It'll be interesting to see what they do, if they remain healthy."

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MLB. Lee is healthy, strong amid Phillies' battered starting staff

Cliff Lee / GETTY IMAGES

Cliff Lee gave up a pair of runs on three hits and struck out five in three and two-thirds against Atlanta. Lee has good command and velocity.

"My goal is to be ready when we play the Texas Rangers (the Phillies season opener on May 31)," Lee said. "I've felt good since I've come down here."

Lee is one player the Phillies don't have to worry about. He looks ready to go.

"That's what you expect from Cliff Lee," A.J. Burnett said. "I've always admired him when I was in the other dugout. He's a tremendous pitcher. I look back at what he did for the Phillies during the 2009 World Series when I was with the Yankees. He was great. He looks like the same guy he was five years ago."

Cole Hamels got some good news Monday as well, the team announcing he will throw again on Wednesday. ED CONDRAN

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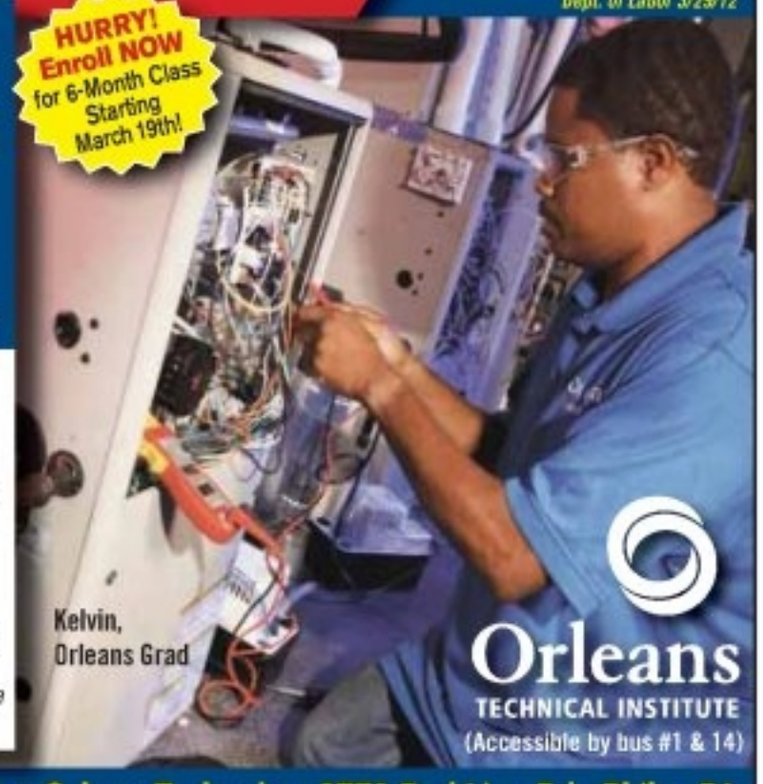

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ONE DAY SALE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12 SHOP 9AM-11PM (IT'S A SALE TOO BIG TO FIT IN A DAY!)
ALSO SHOP TODAY, MARCH 11 FROM 9AM-10PM

HOURS MAY VARY BY STORE. VISIT MACYS.COM & CLICK ON *STORES* FOR LOCAL INFORMATION.

FREE SHIPPING AT MACYS.COM WITH $99 ONLINE PURCHASE. NO PROMO CODE NEEDED; EXCLUSIONS APPLY.

DOORBUSTERS 9AM-1PM BOTH DAYS 4 HOURS ONLY! GREAT ITEMS! GREAT PRICES!

DOORBUSTER
70% OFF
CLEARANCE
Doorbuster 14.85-20.85.
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DOORBUSTER
20% OFF
MENSWEAR
Doorbuster $118-$260
Reg. $295-$650. Suits, sportcoats & raincoats from Kenneth Cole Reaction® (★ WebID 880170), ourTasso Elba, more.

DOORBUSTER
19.99
YOUR CHOICE
Reg. $44-$49, after 1pm: 24.50-24.99. **Only at Macy's.** Style & Co. sweatshirts or jeans. Misses & petites. (★ WebID 1008629). Women's prices slightly higher

DOORBUSTER
60%OFF
DRESSES
Doorbuster 19.60-31.60.
Reg. $49-$79, after 1pm: 24.50-39.50. From Rare Editions (★ WebID 1093883), Bonnie Jean & more. Infants' 3-24 mos; girls' 2-16.

DOORBUSTER 20% OFF REGULAR & SALE PRICES SELECT ITEMS FOR HER & KIDS

DOORBUSTER **39.99**
MEN'S ALFANI DRESS SHOES
Reg. 59.99, after 1pm: 49.99. Selections include, from left: Proud (★ WebID 649700), Ascher (★ 696956) & Ace (★ 646462).

DOORBUSTER
2 FOR $24
BRAS
Reg. $33-$40, after 1pm: buy 1, get 75% off 2nd. From Bali®, Vanity Fair®, Maidenform® & all Playtex®. Shown: Bali® Double Support. ★ WebID 801274.

DOORBUSTER
20% OFF
IMPULSE HANDBAGS
Doorbuster 47.20-127.20. Reg. $59-$159. Select totes, satchels, crossbodies and more.

DOORBUSTER
EXTRA 25% OFF
SHOES
Doorbuster 29.99-142.99.
Reg. $45-$198, after 1pm: 39.99-189.99. Dress & casual selections from Impulse, juniors, Nine West, Marc Fisher & more.

DOORBUSTER **39.99**
DIAMOND RING
Reg. $160, after 1pm: $60. 1/4 ct. t.w.‡ black & white rose-cut** in sterling silver by Victoria Townsend. ★ WebID 730066.

DOORBUSTER
70% OFF
GIANI BERNINI
Doorbuster $9-$39
Reg. $30-$135, after 1pm: 11.25-50.63. **Only at Macy's.** All 24k gold over sterling silver (★ WebID 503249) or sterling silver (★ 700191) chains.

DOORBUSTER **$99**
SAPPHIRE & DIAMOND RING
Reg. $300, after 1pm: 112.50. In sterling silver. ★ WebID 343313. Also in ruby or emerald.

DOORBUSTER
$99
DIAMOND STUDS
Reg. $400, after 1pm: $150. 1/4 ct. t.w.‡ in 10k white gold. ★ WebID 1046988.

DOORBUSTER
79.99
5-PC. SPINNER LUGGAGE SET
Reg. $260, after 1pm: 129.99. Skyway Freedom 27" & 21" spinners, duffel, tote & travel kit. ★ WebID 1072645.

DOORBUSTER
40% OFF
BLENDERS & FOOD PROCESSORS
Doorbusters 23.99-359.99.
Reg. 39.99-599.99, after 1pm: 29.99-419.99. From Cuisinart, Ninja, KitchenAid® & more.

DOORBUSTER **40% OFF**
COFFEE, TEA & ESPRESSO MAKERS
Doorbuster 23.99-767.99.
Reg. 39.99-1279.99, after 1pm: 29.99-899.99. From Cuisinart, Nespresso, Krups and more.

DOORBUSTER
29.99
QUEEN OR KING 6-PC. SHEET SETS
Reg. $100 & $120, after 1pm: 49.99. 300-thread count cotton/polyester with 4 pillowcases. ★ WebID 744070.

OR, EXTRA SAVINGS TODAY 9AM-1PM OR WEDNESDAY 9AM-1PM

SAVINGS PASS DISCOUNTS DO NOT APPLY TO DOORBUSTERS & DEALS OF THE DAY.

★macy's WOW! $10 OFF
ALL SALE & CLEARANCE APPAREL AND SELECT HOME ITEMS!
CANNOT BE USED ON DOORBUSTERS OR DEALS OF THE DAY

$10 OFF

YOUR PURCHASE OF $25 OR MORE.
VALID 3/11 'TIL 1PM OR 3/12/14 'TIL 1PM
LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER.

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Also excludes: Everyday Values (EDV), specials, super buys, furniture, mattresses, floor coverings, rugs, electrics/electronics, cosmetics/fragrances, athletic shoes for him, her & kids, Dallas Cowboys merchandise, gift cards, jewelry trunk shows, New Era, Nike on Field, previous purchases, special orders, selected licensed depts., special purchases, services. Exclusions may differ at macys.com. Cannot be combined with any savings pass/coupon, extra discount or credit offer, except opening a new Macy's account. Dollar savings are allocated as discounts off each eligible item, as shown on receipt. When you return an item, you forfeit the savings allocated to that item. This coupon has no cash value and may not be redeemed for cash, used to purchase gift cards or applied as payment or credit to your account. Purchase must be $25 or more, exclusive of tax and delivery fees.

★macy's WOW! $20 OFF
ALL SALE & CLEARANCE APPAREL AND SELECT HOME ITEMS!
CANNOT BE USED ON DOORBUSTERS OR DEALS OF THE DAY

$20 OFF

YOUR PURCHASE OF $50 OR MORE.
VALID 3/11 'TIL 1PM OR 3/12/14 'TIL 1PM
LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER.

00007102107518082118

Also excludes: Everyday Values (EDV), specials, super buys, furniture, mattresses, floor coverings, rugs, electrics/electronics, cosmetics/fragrances, athletic shoes for him, her & kids, Dallas Cowboys merchandise, gift cards, jewelry trunk shows, New Era, Nike on Field, previous purchases, special orders, selected licensed depts., special purchases, services. Exclusions may differ at macys.com. Cannot be combined with any savings pass/coupon, extra discount or credit offer, except opening a new Macy's account. Dollar savings are allocated as discounts off each eligible item, as shown on receipt. When you return an item, you forfeit the savings allocated to that item. This coupon has no cash value and may not be redeemed for cash, used to purchase gift cards or applied as payment or credit to your account. Purchase must be $50 or more, exclusive of tax and delivery fees.

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